

STREETCAR

CURRENTS

July 2024



MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



From the Front Platform—Update on Our Museum

Aaron Isaacs — MSM Board Chair

How many tokens in the jar? We all knew that little kids had dropped plenty of tokens through the cracks in the old wood platform. After the platform was removed, **John Dillery** set about finding and collecting the tokens from the accumulated debris. **Elizabeth Hauck** and her daughter did so as well. The number was substantial, so John organized a contest where our riders could guess how many. Whoever came the closest would win a season pass. The winner is Conor Dolan, who guessed 589, closest to the actual number of 587. John provided further analysis. “Of the 587, five are St. Paul tokens and five are the modern MTM ones we used to use. The distribution of the token count estimates is extremely wide since some contestants were obviously just playing around. The lowest estimate was 50 and the highest was a joking 1,000,025. Out of the 315 estimates only two were below 100 and ten above 1,500. If we consider these as outliers and remove them, we have $315 - 12 = 303$ estimates. These 303 range from 100 to 1,500. I guess that the mean of these numbers is 700, or about 9% over the actual count. A simple average of the 303 entries comes out at 784 which means people tended to overestimate the number of tokens in the jar by quite a bit. But, if we narrow the range to 100 thru 999, the simple average is 526. Looking at the data this way, it shows that most contestants tended to underestimate the actual token count.”



Three anniversaries. On June 18 Metro Transit hosted a party at Target Field Station to commemorate the 20-year and 10-year anniversaries of the openings of the Blue Line and Green Line. They invited us to participate, since this is the 70th anniversary of the 1954 end of streetcars. Coincidentally, all three of these events happened in June. **Leah Harp**, **Anja Curiskis** and **Nick Orbe** staffed our table. Light rail by the numbers

- 176.45 million Blue Line rides since opening (through April 2024)
- 103.27 million Green Line rides since opening (through April 2024)
- 118 light rail vehicles
- 37 light rail stations (13 Blue Line, 18 Green Line, 6 joint)

Book sales. Merchandise Manager **Bill Arends** reports that used book sales have been particularly strong this year. Because they’ve been donated by our members, we can price them to move. so far this year 102 used books have been sold for a total of \$1,336.50. This is broken down as follows.

- Webstore: 38 books totaling \$912.50 (all books are at least \$15 each).
- St. Paul Union Depot Train Days event: 42 books totaling \$298.00 (most were \$5 and \$2 books).
- POS sales in the depot: 22 books \$126.00 (most also are \$5 and \$2 books with a few \$10).
- Total webstore sales Year to date for merchandise \$1,163.50 of which \$912.50 is used books (does not include passes, motorman charter certificates & special events).
- Total Train Days sales were \$414 of which \$298 was used books. The rest was tokens \$40, Como-Harriet book \$40 and a couple of MSM and TCL caps \$36.

If you have railroad and trolley books that you don’t look at anymore, consider donating them. It’s tax deductible.

Inside This Issue

MSM Photo Updates	2
MSM Photo Updates	3
Coming Events	4
MSM News & Views	4
Dick Stoner Obituary	4



Leah Harp, Nick Orbe and Anja Curiskis (taking the photo) represented MSM during Metro Transit's celebration of light rail in the Twin Cities. Nick is a Metro Transit blue line operator. Aaron Isaacs provided a selection of MSM magazines and original materials to tell the story of the Twin City Lines and MSM. The materials were well received by Metro transit workers and by the public in attendance. (Caption by Leah Harp; Photo by Anja Curiskis)



Senior Motorman Mike Buck ran an interesting charter on Sunday June 2nd. It was a real treat—a first time that a birthday charter was booked to wish a happy birthday to....a pooch! "Boyton" was celebrating his 9th birthday with a special charter at CHSL on TCRT PCC No. 322. Family & friends, both human and canine, were on board to honor the birthday boy. Fabulous! Absolutely fabulous! (Mike Buck photos)



Twelve of the approximately 24 MSM Motorettes gathered, ranging from long standing MSM participants to newly minted volunteers to our Summer intern! Anja Curiskis hosted the delicious and exuberant potluck. We all enjoyed feasting, visiting, and meeting new folks. Thanks to ESL Superintendent Karen Kertzman for attending from Eden Prairie. (Caption by Leah Harp; Photo by Anja Curiskis)

Legacy

A legend is someone who leaves behind an indelible impression on others. They've touched lives, they're never forgotten, and they are cherished. Ken Albrecht is one such legend at the Minnesota Streetcar Museum. Ken had many interests and hobbies including; his vegetable farm, ginger cats, music, pipe organs, board games, railroads and anything mechanical. But restoring historic streetcars was always near the top of this list. Ken worked on the restoration efforts of TCRT No. 1239 and No. 1300, but his greatest masterpiece was probably his efforts with the complete restoration of Winona No. 10. Ken passed away in 2021 but his legacy will always remain. Part of this legacy includes inspiring others to get involved and give back to the community. This virtue was certainly passed along to Ken's granddaughter Ali Riehle, who MSM is proud to welcome as one of our new CHSL Operators! Grandpa would be proud.



(Left) Here's Ken's family who attended the memorial gathering in honor of Ken held at the Excelsior Streetcar line on June 10, 2021. They are sitting in Winona No. 10, Ken's restoration *tour-de-force*. That's a photo of ken in the lower right of the photo.

(Right) Here's Ali in her MSM Operator's uniform following in her grandpa's footsteps.



It's a team effort getting the rear bench seat ready for installation in DSR No. 265. **Scott Wardrope, Howie Melco, Carl Floren, and Dick Zawacki** (standing). (Photo by Jerry Draeger)



Duluth Street Railway No. 265 is out for its maiden run following nine months of repairs. The rear platform roof needs the canvas installed and windows need to be installed. Mechanically, the car is ready to run. (L to R) **Howie Melco, Jim Kertzman, Scott Wardrope, Carl Floren, Steve Mages, Tom Heimer, Dave Buckman, Jerry Draeger, and Dick Zawacki**. (Photo by Karen Kertzman)



Howie Melco with a HUGE homemade clamp. It was used to torque down the last 2 inches of some stubborn trim from out of the steamer. Truly, you can't have too many clamps. (Photo by Mike Kimitch)



What's missing from this picture? Nearly 800 pounds of copper wire that was stored on the empty floor space. The shop crew wanted to get the best price for it. They sold it for \$3500.00 when copper was recently at a high. (Photo by Karen Kertzman)

Keep Our Historic Streetcars Clean! Can YOU Help?

Our streetcars don't clean themselves unlike, say, modern self-cleaning ovens. We clean them monthly because they get really dirty! The next two cleaning dates are Saturdays, July 27 and August 24. Tasks are varied: we wash the outside of the streetcars, clean the windows, sweep and wash the floors and clean most interior surfaces. It only takes about a half-dozen volunteers to get all of this done between 9:00AM and 12-noon. And don't forget coffee and doughnuts with the shop crew at 10:00 AM! Family and friends are always welcome to help out. For information, please contact **Louis Hoffman** by e-mail at hoffman.louis@comcast.net or call or text at 612-618-7206.

July 4-----Independence Day operations at both ESL and CHSL
 July 6-----Motorette first hire day at CHSL commemorating the first hiring of women operators by TCRT
 July 16-----PJ Party trolley at CHSL—6 PM and 7 PM
 July 16-----Story-Time Trolley at ESL—5 PM and 6 PM
 July 19, 20 & 21-----Excelsior's *Crazy Days* festival—ESL operates from 1 PM to 4 PM on Friday July 19 and 10 AM to 4 PM on Saturday and Sunday
 July 20-----Owl Service at CHSL operates from 9 PM to 12-midnight



MSM News & Views — News of our Museum's Administration and Membership

Jim Vaitkunas — *MSM Corporate Secretary & Assistant Ops Chief*

Distribution of the *Streetcar Currents*. As announced last month, we have transitioned to a new way to send the *Streetcar Currents* to you. Effective with the June issue, we are using your e-mail address that's located in our MSM member database to send the *Currents* to you. For the first attempt last month, the new system appeared to work well. Out of approximately 300 members only 15 members failed to get the *Currents*. For some we had an incorrect e-mail address. For a few others, we don't know why they didn't receive the currents as we were using their correct e-mail address.

To ensure that you do receive the *Streetcar Currents* we ask that you do three things for us now and in the future.

1. When you receive your member renewal notice in the mail, please check the bottom of the renewal form to make sure we have your correct e-mail address.
2. If you change your e-mail address please let **Jim Vaitkunas** (me) know of the change. (My e-mail address is shown at the bottom of the box on the left.) I'll pass that change along to Member Services Manager **Barb Gacek** who maintains the MSM master member database.
3. Make sure that the e-mail address we use to send the Currents (jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org) is noted in your e-mail program or ISP as a "trusted sender/trusted address." 📧

MINNESOTA STREETCAR MUSEUM



The Minnesota Streetcar Museum is a non-profit, all-volunteer organization with the mission to preserve and communicate to the public the experience of Minnesota's electric street and interurban railway history. To accomplish this mission the Museum operates historic streetcars at two demonstration railways.

**COMO-HARRIET STREETCAR LINE
 Excelsior Streetcar Line**

For more information on our Museum, our collection of historic streetcars and our demonstration railways, visit our website: www.TrolleyRide.org

The museum's business address is:
 P.O. Box 16509
 Minneapolis, MN 55416-0509

**Streetcar CURRENTS
 July—2024**

**Jim Vaitkunas—Editor
 Bill Graham—Distribution**

Streetcar CURRENTS is a newsletter published for the members and friends of the Minnesota Streetcar Museum.

Deadline for submitting items for the next edition of the *Streetcar CURRENTS* is July 20, 2024.

Contact the editor **Jim Vaitkunas** at the following e-mail address:
Jim.vaitkunas@trolleyride.org

Dick Stoner Passes

MSM member and volunteer **Dick Stoner** passed away on May 29, 2024 at the age of 91. He was a living link to the Mesaba Railway interurban that connected Minnesota's Iron Range towns. Growing up in Hibbing, his father ran the Mesaba's streetcar that connected Hibbing's original townsite with the new Hibbing after Oliver Mining moved the town to get at the iron ore under it. Dick became an MSM member in 2003. He ran streetcars and worked in the shop. We have photos of him in 2006 on the crew that re-sided TCRT No. 1300. Among other things, Dick applied the exterior lettering. He donated the switch stand that now controls access to the speeder shed siding. Dick was a terrific model builder, with a large "O" gauge traction layout. He scratch built beautiful TCRT, Mesaba Railway and Minneapolis Anoka & Cuyuna Range interurban and streetcars. A celebration of life is scheduled August 12th at 10am at Bradshaw Funeral Home, 4600 Greenhaven Drive, White Bear Lake.

Here's Dick working on TCRT No. 1300 in 2006.

